

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

PIC
The Rotterdam Convention on Prior Informed Consent Procedure
for Certain Hazardous Pesticides in International Trade, with Annexes
July 20, 1999

The U.S. signed the Convention on September 11, 1998. As of July 1999, approximately 60 other countries also signed. Its entry into force is dependent upon ratification by at least 50 countries, and the U.S. involvement is dependent upon the advice and consent of the Senate. (Gambia was apparently the first country to ratify.) The convention builds upon a voluntary procedure in place since 1992, with 150 countries participating.

The Convention establishes a procedure to promote shared responsibility in the international trade in certain hazardous chemicals through exchange of information and communication of national decisions about their import.

- **Basic obligation:** for those pesticides and chemicals that are added to the list, if a country says it does not wish to permit import, an exporting country is supposed to prohibit export of that chemical to that country.

The voluntary procedure, as well as the recently concluded legally binding agreement, has enjoyed a broad base of support from industry, environmental and consumer interest groups. All have expressed support for ratification.

Currently, there are 22 pesticides and 5 industrial chemicals in the PIC procedure.

The agreement established an "Interim Procedure," to ease the transition from the voluntary procedure to the legally binding one. Both the Legally Binding and the Interim Procedures have been constructed by an International Negotiating Committee (INC), which is a plenary body with over 100 countries represented. The INC is supported by a Chemical Review Committee, comprised of experts from the designated governments and regions, which reviews technical documents and makes recommendations about new chemicals for the procedure, as well as about policy issues related to the criteria.

The Interim Negotiating Committee at its last meeting (July 1999) approved two additional pesticides for inclusion in the procedure, and referred four others to the CRC for further work.

Current status of legislative activities:

- the State Department has prepared a transmittal package for the White House, with a recommendation that it be forwarded to the Senate for advice and consent;
- implementing legislative language has been drafted and is under review;
- goal is to have it to the Senate in the Fall.

For more information:

<http://www.fao.org/waicent/FaoInfo/Agricult/AGP/AGPP/Pesticid/PIC/pichome.htm>